



Tripartite Alliance for
Fair & Progressive Employment Practices

Flexible Work Arrangement Implementation in the Manufacturing Sector



• Case Studies Featuring •



Produced by:



Tripartite Alliance for
Fair & Progressive Employment Practices

tafep.sg

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What are Flexible Work Arrangements?

Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) encompass a range of options that allow employers and employees to structure **when, where, and how work is done**, beyond the usual work arrangements.

Therefore, **FWAs extend well beyond working from home**.

The **Tripartite Guidelines on Flexible Work Arrangement Requests (TG-FWAR)** require every employer to have a process in place to properly consider formal FWA requests.

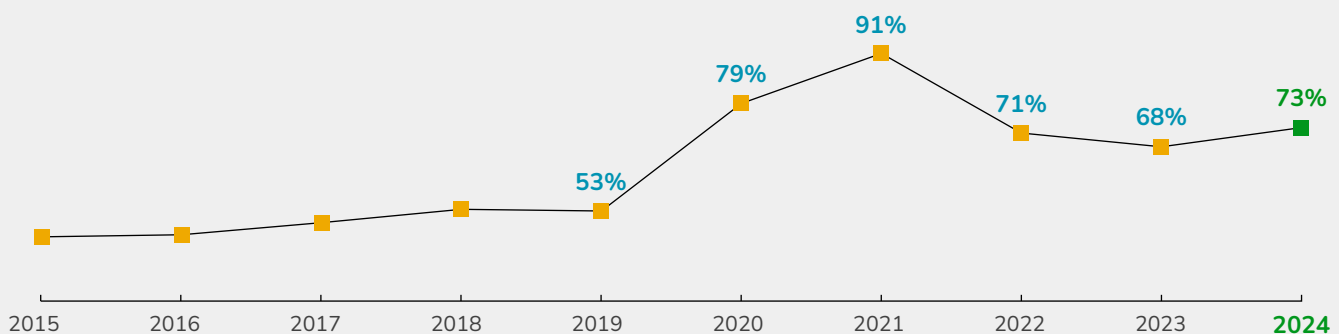
The Guidelines also broadly classify FWAs into three categories:

 Flexi-Time	 Flexi-Place	 Flexi-Load
Work hours and schedules	Work location	Workload
Examples: ▶ Staggered hours ▶ Shift swapping ▶ Flexi-hours	Examples: ▶ Working remotely ▶ Working in clients' offices or satellite offices	Examples: ▶ Job sharing ▶ Part-time work ▶ Project-based work

Learn more about the various types of FWAs at tafep.sg.

FWA Adoption Remains Higher than Pre-Pandemic Levels (i.e., 2019 and Earlier)

Proportions of Establishments Offering At Least One Type Of Scheduled FWA, 2024



Note:

Scheduled FWA includes part-time work, flexi-hours, staggered hours, scheduled tele-working, homeworking, job sharing, and compressed work-week.

¹ Conditions of Employment 2024, Ministry of Manpower (MOM)

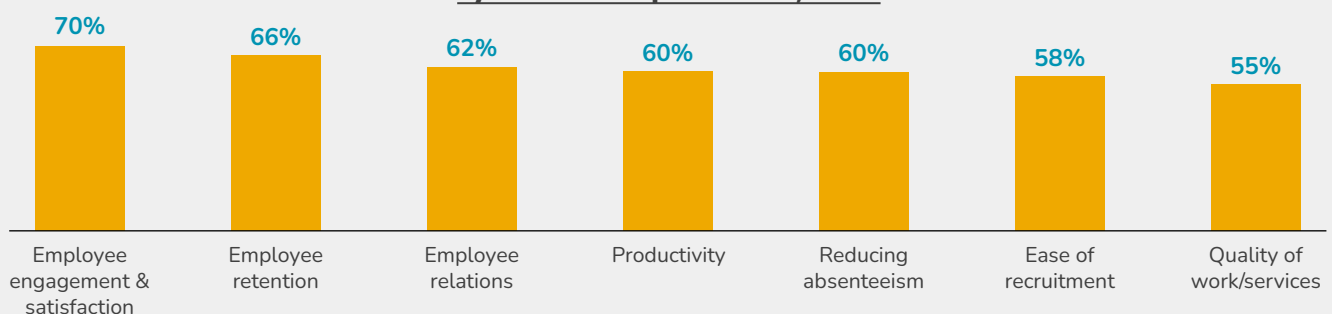
Why do FWAs matter?

When done right, FWAs can deliver compelling win-win outcomes for employer and employee:

Benefits	Employer	Employee
 Enhanced Employee Engagement	▶ Foster stronger employee commitment to organisation's goals ▶ Cultivate higher levels of trust, embedded in workplace culture	▶ Improved work-life harmony and overall well-being ▶ More energised and engaged at work
 Improved Employee Retention	▶ Lower staff turnover and recruitment costs ▶ Better continuity of skills and institutional knowledge ▶ Reduced disruption to operations	▶ Ability to continue working in organisation despite personal circumstances (e.g., caregiving responsibilities, health needs) ▶ Greater inclination to stay and grow within the organisation
 Stronger Talent Attraction	▶ Greater access to a broader and more diverse talent pool (e.g., caregivers, mature workers) ▶ Improved employer brand	▶ Confidence that FWAs are supported by clear policies and processes, when considering the organisation as a long-term employer

Increase in Engagement and Retention are Most Common Benefits of FWAs

Proportions of Establishments Which Reported Positive Impact of Scheduled FWAs, by Areas of Improvement, 2024



Notes:

(1) Organisations are allowed to select more than one option.

(2) Organisations may also report other positive impact of scheduled FWAs which are not separately presented here.

¹ Conditions of Employment 2024, Ministry of Manpower (MOM)



FWA Implementation in Manufacturing Sector

To better understand best practices in implementing FWAs in the manufacturing sector, we spoke with two manufacturing organisations that have successfully implemented FWAs.

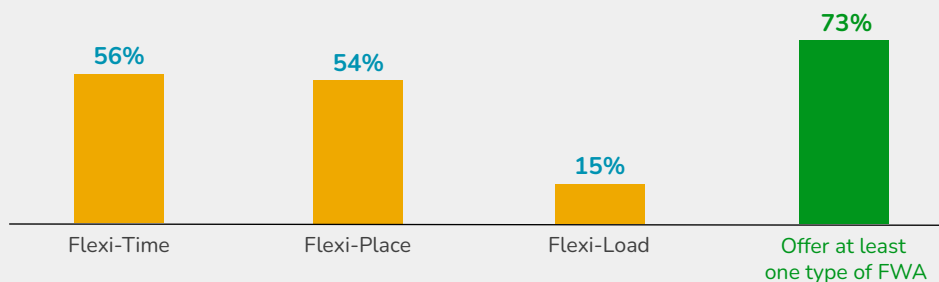


Drawing from their experiences, we highlight common FWA approaches, practical solutions to FWA implementation challenges, and case studies showcasing how **FWAs can deliver tangible benefits to your workforce and business.**

The majority of manufacturing organisations (approx. 73%) offer at least one type of FWA²

Flexi-time and Flexi-place are the most commonly offered types of FWAs in Manufacturing

FWA Types Offered in Manufacturing Sector, 2024



² Employers' Perspective on TG-FWAR, Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS) and Singapore National Employers Federation (SNEF)

Common FWAs Adopted

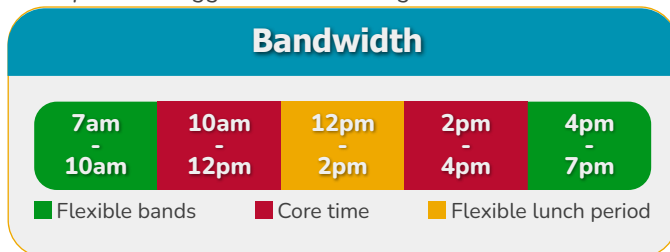
Across the two manufacturing organisations interviewed, the following FWAs were commonly adopted:



Staggered Hours

- ▶ A **flexi-time arrangement** where employees can vary their start and end times within flexible bands, while maintaining total hours across a normal work week
- ▶ Typically, there is a core time during which employees must work

Example of a staggered hours arrangement



1. Communicate your scheduling guidelines and procedures to employees, including limitations that may compromise their preferred schedules
2. Maintain a shared roster that shows each employee's working days and hours and make it accessible to all team members
3. Where changes to an employee's agreed hours are required, provide sufficient notice to allow them time to adjust accordingly



Telecommuting

- ▶ A **flexi-place arrangement** where the job is performed at a location other than the workplace
- ▶ Telecommuting may be conducted on a situational or regular basis

1. Communicate telecommuting guidelines, including the work schedule, equipment used, and other relevant details
2. Set clear expectations on the responsible use of telecommuting arrangements, including norms on responsiveness and performance



Part-Time Work

- ▶ A **flexi-load arrangement** in which employees work reduced hours on a regular basis
- ▶ Part-time employees normally work less than 35 hours in a week

1. Take note of [legal requirements and regulations](#) for part-time employment
2. Review factors to consider for part-time arrangements. You may download our [sample checklist](#) (PDF) as a reference

Addressing Common Challenges in Offering FWAs

Sectors with high volumes of onsite roles face distinct implementation challenges.

Despite operational constraints and concerns, the aforementioned two organisations found ways to overcome challenges and implement FWAs that suit their business context.

This overview outlines common challenges in offering FWAs, along with practical approaches these organisations used to overcome challenges.

Challenges



Employees need to be physically present at workplace due to nature of work

Best Practices

- ▶ **Implement time-based flexibility for on-site roles**
e.g., Shimano Singapore enables operators to request alternative shifts when personal exigencies arise, subject to operational requirements
- ▶ **Review job roles and identify tasks that can possibly be done off-site**
e.g., HOPE Technik introduced the use of technology that enables employees to conduct remote checks on assembly work for quality assurance
- ▶ **Communicate clearly why certain FWAs apply to some roles and not others to manage expectations and maintain trust across the workforce**
e.g., HOPE Technik uses townhalls to share the rationale behind its FWA initiatives and engage with employees on their feedback
- ▶ **Beyond FWAs, introduce Work-Life Programmes such as Enhanced Leave Schemes and Employee Support Schemes to better support employees' work-life needs**



Difficult to monitor employees' work performance

- ▶ **Shift the focus from monitoring staff presence to evaluating outcomes**

e.g. at Shimano Singapore, clear performance expectations are set to ensure alignment between employees and managers, with responsible FWA use emphasised



Buy-in from Management

- ▶ **FWAs are more effective when leaders are involved in the process, understand the “why”, explain decisions, and listen to people on the ground**

e.g., HOPE Technik collects employee feedback through multiple channels such as focus groups and reviews these insights, during monthly management meetings. This allows the management team to refine practices to ensure their ongoing viability



Manpower constraints and workload balancing

- ▶ **Consider starting small by piloting FWAs with selected teams and roles**

e.g., Shimano Singapore took a phased approach, starting with its HR and Finance departments, where FWAs were easier to implement. Processes were refined based on feedback from staff and managers, before scaling up implementation to other departments



Difficult to find a common time when everyone is available

- ▶ **Clearly define core office hours for each team, and communicate them across the organisation**
- ▶ **Schedule meetings in advance or set fixed regular dates and times.**



• Case Studies

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to implementing FWAs. **Each organisation must find solutions that works for its unique business and workforce needs.**

The case studies that follow show how the aforementioned manufacturing firms have done exactly that, implementing FWAs well and reaping tangible, positive outcomes.

Through their experiences, we hope these examples will inspire and guide your organisation's own approach to FWAs.



HOPE Technik, a leading Singapore-grown system integration engineering firm specialising in robotics, automation and special vehicles. With expertise across the entire engineering spectrum and support from in-house manufacturing, the organisation has delivered world-class products to a global clientele.

Sub-sector: Mechanical, Electronics and Software

Employment Size: >70

Employment Profile:

Software, mechanical, electrical, system engineers, machinists, welders and operators



Business Case

HOPE Technik's FWA approach is driven by shifting workforce expectations and a competitive talent market, where flexibility has become a key differentiator in attracting and retaining employees.

The implementation of FWA practices have enhanced its employer value proposition while maintaining high productivity standards.

“

Regular engagement between management and our departments allows us to listen openly, test new ideas, and refine our FWA policies. If a suggestion helps solve pain points, we try it; if it doesn't, we improve it again. That's how we keep flexibility fair and meaningful.

”



Daniel Nia
Chief Executive
Officer

• Key Success Factors •



Keeping Performance at the Core

- ▶ FWAs implementation is anchored on the principle that **productivity must not be compromised**
- ▶ Clear performance criteria reinforce a culture of **accountability and high performance**
- ▶ Telecommuting eligibility is based on employee's demonstrated **responsibility**, which is a criterion in performance evaluation



FWA Policy and Continuous Review

- ▶ Multiple **feedback channels** used, such as focus groups, surveys, exit interviews
- ▶ **Monthly management meetings** to discuss and implement employee feedback
- ▶ Established a **clear FWA policy**, documenting organisation's FWA processes for all employees to view



Maintain open dialogue and clear communication

- ▶ Senior leaders share not just the rules, but the **rationale behind decisions**
- ▶ Townhalls and Q&A sessions create **open dialogue and trust**
- ▶ FWA policy updates are communicated via **staff mailers and employee handbook revisions**



• FWA Request Process (in line with TG-FWAR) •

Formal Request Process



HOPE Teknik adopts a formal FWA request process, which is covered clearly in its employee handbook:

1. Employee discusses the request with their direct supervisor
2. Supervisor assesses operational feasibility and provides a recommendation
3. Request is submitted to HR for policy alignment and consistency checks
4. Final approval is granted by senior management / CEO, ensuring alignment with business needs

“

FWA has helped improve work-life. By adjusting my work hours, I have more control over my schedule to manage personal needs and reduces stress from commuting.

”



Nurul Atiqah
Finance Executive



• Key Outcomes and Success Indicators •



Positive Employer Branding

FWAs were increasingly cited during recruitment conversations as a positive factor, strengthening HOPE Technik's employer value proposition.



HOPE Technik was conferred these Silver Standards in the 15th Singapore HR Awards:

- ▶ Diversity & Inclusion
- ▶ Employee Engagement
- ▶ Employee Well-Being



Sustain Strong Business Performance



With the implementation of FWAs, project timelines and delivery standards remained stable and did not negatively impact business outcomes.

HOPE Technik has continued to deliver cutting-edge robotics, automation and AI-enabled solutions, and was recognised by Senior Minister Lee Hsien Loong in his Defence Science and Technology Agency (DSTA) 25th Anniversary Dinner speech.



SHIMANO

Established in 1973, **Shimano Singapore** was the first overseas bicycle component manufacturing facility outside Shimano Inc.'s Japan headquarters. Over the decades, it has grown into a full-fledged manufacturing hub with end-to-end design, engineering and production capabilities.

Today, Shimano Singapore serves as the Regional Headquarters, managing 13 subsidiaries across Asia and the Czech Republic.

Sub-sector: Manufacturing Bicycle Components

Employment Size: >500

Employment Profile:

Operators, engineering, logistics,
IT, finance, and support staff



Business Case

Shimano Singapore first introduced FWAs as early as 2000 to improve staff retention. This was in response to employee feedback, and FWAs enabled employees to manage personal needs without requiring them to take leave.

Today, FWA implementation has helped sustain employee satisfaction and support business continuity during disruptions like COVID-19.



FWA gives staff greater control over when, where, or how they work, which can help them better balance work and personal commitments, reducing stress and burnout. In turn, this flexibility often leads to higher morale, improved well-being, and increased engagement and productivity at work.



Thomas Lee

Deputy Director,
Direct Engineering

• Key Success Factors •



Start Small, Then Expand

- ▶ **Phased approach** allowed managers to test what works and refine processes before scaling up
- ▶ Begin by identifying teams that can adapt more easily (e.g., Finance) to **pilot FWAs**
- ▶ As FWA implementation scaled up, managers from later departments **benefitted from the lessons** of earlier departments, particularly in addressing challenges during the earlier stages of rollout



Build a Culture of Trust and Mutual Accountability

- ▶ Communicate that FWAs are **mutually beneficial arrangements** between employer and employee, rather than guaranteed entitlements
- ▶ **Managers are empowered** to exercise discretion in approving FWAs beyond the FWA policy parameters in exceptional personal circumstances
- ▶ **Trust is emphasised** as a core value, with employees expected to deliver outcomes, and managers encouraged to focus on results rather than monitoring staff's presence



Ensure Systems Support FWAs

- ▶ Employees should be able to **access work files remotely** with reliable speed
- ▶ **Technology investments** strengthen resilience during disruptions
- ▶ **Secure IT infrastructure** established to transition from paper-based processes to digital workflows



FWA Request Process (in line with TG-FWAR)

Formal Request Process



Employees can submit a formal FWA request through the staff intranet portal.

1. The manager reviews the request in consideration with operational needs and arranges a discussion with the employee if clarifications are needed
2. Request is submitted to HR for eligibility and administrative checks
3. Managers are encouraged to communicate the decision in person before updating the status of the request in the portal

Managers were briefed on the TG-FWAR to ensure compliance with the guidelines, which includes the requirement to respond to an employee's request within two months from the date the request was submitted.

FWAs has greatly benefited me by enabling earlier working hours and reducing commuting time. It allows me to share morning school drop-off responsibilities and get more rest during the week, which has improved my work productivity and overall wellbeing.

Anthony Oh

Research & Development,
Senior Staff Designer



• Key Outcomes and Success Indicators •



Enhanced Employee Retention

Shimano Singapore's FWA practices have contributed to improved employee retention over the years, especially among younger employees who highly value workplace flexibility.



Greater Business Continuity Preparedness

With digitalised workflows and robust IT infrastructure developed over the years prior to COVID-19, Shimano Singapore is well positioned to support remote work during disruptions such as a pandemic, or when there is a need to reduce the number of employees coming into the office for business continuity and operational reasons.



Additional Resources



While FWAs are a key driver in supporting employees' work-life needs, they are one piece of a holistic approach in fostering work-life harmony in the organisation.

[Discover more resources](#) on FWA implementation and work-life harmony to further enhance efforts that support your organisation's work-life strategies.

References

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- ² Employers' Perspective on the Tripartite Guidelines on Flexible Work Arrangement Requests (TG-FWAR). Available at:
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[Accessed in June 2026]

Note: This resource was developed based on insights from organisations in the Manufacturing Sector. We hope this guide will also be of use to other sectors who may face similar challenges in implementing FWAs across various roles in their organisations.



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About Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Employment Practices

The Tripartite Alliance for Fair and Progressive Employment Practices (TAFEP) was set up in 2006 by the tripartite partners (Ministry of Manpower, National Trades Union Congress, and Singapore National Employers Federation), to promote the adoption of fair, responsible and progressive employment practices.

TAFEP is one of three agencies under TAL, along with the Tripartite Alliance for Dispute Management (TADM) and the Workplace Safety and Health (WSH) Council.

TAFEP helps employers build workplaces where employees are respected, valued and able to achieve their fullest potential, for the success of the organisation. Employers can approach TAFEP for tools, resource materials and assistance to implement fair and progressive practices at their workplaces. Employees or individuals who encounter workplace discrimination or harassment can seek assistance and advice from TAFEP.